

FULBRIGHT SAYS LAIRD USES FEAR TO PROMOTE ABM

Scores Secretary's Stress
on Soviet Missile Buildup
to Justify Safeguard

GORE ATTACKS SYSTEM

But Pentagon Chief Warns
Russians 'Are Going for a
First-Strike Capability'

3/22/69

Excerpts from missile hearing
are printed on Page 17.

By JOHN W. FINNEY

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 21—Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird was accused by Senator J. W. Fulbright today of invoking "the technique of fear" of the Russians to sell the Safeguard missile defense system to Congress and the American people.

The chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee made the accusation as Mr. Laird appeared before the Disarmament Subcommittee to defend the Administration's proposed Safeguard system, designed to protect the nation's strategic deterrent.

Mr. Laird ran into an expected critical reception from a subcommittee that constitutes the hard core of the Senate opposition to an antiballistic missile system. But during the all-day televised hearing he suc-

ceeded in keeping the basically antagonistic subcommittee off balance with a loquaciousness he learned in his Congressional days as a Republican Representative from Wisconsin.

Senator Annoyed

An obviously annoyed Senator Fulbright finally broke in to deliver a 10-minute lecture to the Secretary, seated in the witness chair in the Senate Caucus Room.

Peering out from under green-shaded glasses, the Senator complained that the Administration was not moving fast enough to end the Vietnam war. He took Mr. Laird to task for the manner in which he was emphasizing the Soviet missile buildup as the principal justification for proceeding with the \$6.5-billion Safeguard system.

"Suddenly the Russians are becoming eight feet tall," he drawled tartly, "and they are about to overwhelm us."

He told the Defense Secretary that what he was doing was employing "a kind of technique of fear to precipitate acceptance of a large program."

Repeats View on Soviet

Mr. Laird, as he had done yesterday before a far more sympathetic Senate Armed Services Committee, repeatedly emphasized that the Russians seemed intent on acquiring a first-strike capability—an ability to deal such a devastating attack that the United States could not retaliate with its deterrent force of missiles and bombers.

But he appeared today to have carried his previously qualified assessment of Soviet intentions a step further. At one point, when pressed by subcommittee questions after four hours in the witness chair, he declared: "The Soviets are

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